

the first premium in the open competition for the London Royal Exchange.

The Insurance Office in question is wholly of stone, of large size (the frontage in North John-street is about 93 feet, and in Dale-street, 52 feet 6 inches), and of highly ornate Italian character, shewing much originality in some of the details. The key-stones over the two-pair windows are cleverly carved into heads with foliage. The attic story is a little over-done; but the general effect of the whole is exceedingly good, and reflects great credit on Mr. Grellier. The doorway (in the North John-street front) is adorned with sculpture, including the Royal and Liverpool arms, firemen's axes and helmets, and the ancient crest of the city, "the liver," executed by Mr. C. S. Kelsey. Messrs. Mackarel and Co. were the contractors; and the amount expended on the building is from 17,000*l.* to 18,000*l.*, exclusive of the land, which cost about 10,000*l.* extra.

The week after we were in Liverpool the Church of St. Francis Xavier, Salisbury-street, erected from the designs of Mr. J. J. Scoles, for the Jesuits, was opened. This is a large and important structure (150 feet long and 60 feet wide, internally) in the geometric style of pointed architecture (that of the end of the thirteenth century), and has a lofty square tower at the north-west angle of the building, intended to carry a spire. The church is calculated to hold from 1,500 to 1,800 persons. We did not see it, but understand that it is a very successful work.\*

When we add to what we have already noticed, that "the Sailors' Home" a large Elizabethan building, the first stone whereof was laid by Prince Albert in 1846, is approaching completion; that a depot for emigrants, to contain some thousands of persons, is being erected; not to say any thing of a

proposed Theatre; a Chapel for the new parochial cemetery about to be commenced under the direction of Mr. Pictou; or the "York Buildings," in Dale-street, just emerging from the ground under the same architect, and which are to cost about 16,000*l.*—our readers will see that additions are being made to Liverpool of no ordinary extent and character.

London is certainly not England, however true it may be that Paris is France: and if a foreigner wish proof of this, he will find it in LIVERPOOL, to begin with.

#### HOW IS ART TO BE STUDIED?

IN the introductory essay on the scientific principles involved in the study of the fine arts,\* the efforts made were to convince the reader that the principles of art ought to be based on the sure foundation which renders other departments of knowledge productive of important practical results in the progress of mankind, and it was hoped by the more genial influence of positive science to dispel the thick mists in which art-principles are involved. Modern philosophy asked this important question—Have we any ideas independent of experience? It was answered in the negative. Mysticism was abandoned, reverie and dream passed fleetingly away, useful knowledge and vigorous action rose with the dawn. The dwellings of art alone have their begrimed casements closed and curtained, amidst the hum and bustle of the awakened world; dreams are still strong upon their idle inhabitants, who yawn at utilitarianism. Utilitarianism, the so-called transcendentalists, is it not the great principle of the universe? Utility watches over the world, directing the smallest atoms and the great globe itself in their appointed courses. Let the investigator penetrate wherever he may into the depths of nature, anatomize the vegetable and animal kingdoms, or gaze on worlds beyond, does he find aught unnecessary, useless? Say not that utilitarianism is a low motive, when it is the great lesson taught in the works of "The Good." It is ruling in the nerves, veins, and arteries of those who deny it. Shall it be said contemptuously that a man of science dated his greatness from an improvement in spectacles? Is it no boon to mankind to have the portals of the understanding opened—the blind to receive light? The eye, the theme of the poet, the essential sense of the painter,—how wondrous in economy and utility! Inutilitarianism is alone to be feared, if such chaotic quality exists. Useless was a word invented by man as a symbol of his ignorance and selfishness; conditions which prevent him perceiving utility beyond his own immediate opinions and necessities. Even error itself has its use, forming, as it does, the threatening phalanx which keeps the army of truth organized and on the alert. Man must always have to conquer, to compel him to action: victory is more dangerous to him than defeat. The pioneers of civilization must be ever hacking and hewing in the primeval forests of prejudice, not only lopping the branches and felling the trunks, but in tearing out the insidious and entwined roots. Should men once say, "It is enough, let us seek repose," a new forest forthwith springs up and closes in upon them. Let the artist remember that wrong has had its martyrs as well as right; as utilitarianism is in the ascendant, let him not despise it and fall a victim to its power.

We have endeavoured to depreciate the study of ancient art on various grounds. It has been argued, that this is to abjure experience: if we believed this to be the tendency of our opinion, we would willingly abandon it,—but it is not the case. Let a picture or statue of a past age, assumed of the highest possible excellence, be placed before an artist, does he understand why a certain arrangement of colour, of grouping, of light, and shade, &c., in the one case, or why a certain selection of forms in the other, answer well as the mechanism of production? If so, there is no need for him to copy, for this is precisely what the authors of them knew. Suppose, on the contrary, that an artist stands before the picture or statue in the humble spirit of a learner, will the picture

inform him why certain arrangements were used in preference to others,—will the statue reveal how its forms were selected and compacted? will looking at the sun inform us of the nature of its light? We should as soon expect to hear of a student being perfected in a foreign language by copying page after page without knowing the value of a single word. It is not the value of experience that we deny, but the efficacy of old paintings and sculptures to impart it: the result of encouraging their study is to produce copies,—to make imitators of a particular master, or compounders of the heterogeneous qualities of many.

In the recent instances we have assumed the works to be of the highest perfection attainable; but if there is the least room left for the supposition that we take the assertions of habit and fashion as proof of the excellence of ancient art, as suggested on a former occasion, then indeed men ought to hesitate before forcing it on the public or the student, as by this means mannerisms may be perpetuated; its very study indicates the modern artist's thralldom, and is an evidence of a negative character in favour of the ancient, at the same time that it is affirmative of want of knowledge when moderns affect to admire without understanding, and of want of resolution, if, understanding perfectly, they do not, in performance, rival or surpass it.

We have before expressed our conviction, that to become adequate judges of the perfection or defects of ancient painters and sculptors, the student must forsake the dead to seek the living,—not only the living artists, but all pervading life: nature is alone the standard by which art can be judged, a long and diligent study of her laws will alone enable him to arbitrate. Every artist has doubtless in his experience felt humiliated in the presence of this monitor, after having done all in his power to rival her, and may have observed, the more attentive he has been to her instructions the more sensible he has become of falling short of excellence; he may recollect, too, after having neglected the study of nature for any considerable period, in again contemplating his performance, which before disgusted him, while in the habit of referring to his archetypes, that he found his acuteness of perception blunted: the odious comparison forgotten, he wondered at his own power. To the thoughtful, this self-satisfied condition is a strong symptom of decay and a powerful incitement to future diligence. If we find the artist's power of discrimination falls off when the study of nature is neglected, how shall we estimate the authority and judgments of those who never receive the impetus to observe with the constant and minute attention of the practical man? It may be suggested that art may be understood in theory without the power of practice; we do not believe it possible: shadowy notions may, perhaps, be possessed; but such a theory never rises to that power of perception which appears to be an extension of sensibility, in the direction in which sense is continually exercised by the practical man. How often is wonder expressed at his subtlety of discrimination; his detection of flaws and imperfections quite imperceptible to the ordinary observer? many consider it to be only an ill-natured disposition to find fault. On the other hand, the practical man regards the want of discriminating power as blindness in those who cannot detect the subtle merits and defects which he does. A man must certainly have some sort of theory, before he addresses himself to practice, to preside over action; he must have a pre-notion of the means to attain the end proposed,—which may be right or wrong, as results will reveal to him. In his first efforts, his theories are constantly meeting with contradiction,—thus in theorising, practising, failing, practice and theory mutually act and react on each other, till, "dangerous" being marked on every side, he discovers a safe path between. Practical men may record; and by this means critics, perhaps, pick up a species of theoretical experience,—but it is knowledge at "second-hand": books can never give all the ramifications nor the vitality of real experience; for, says the proverb, "experience taught is never equal to experience bought." It is amusing to hear how men of parrot information lecture those from whom they have imperfectly derived it. Theory and practice are soul and body; separate them,

\* The following description is forwarded us by a correspondent, and may be relied on:—The northern and principal front is divided into three compartments of unequal height, corresponding with the internal arrangement of the nave and aisles, by projecting buttresses of four stages. The central compartment, which is the loftiest of the three, is occupied by a window of large size, divided into two sub-arches by a central mullion, composed of clustered shafts with sculptured capitals, and each of these again into two foliated lights by a chamfered mullion with a single attached shaft. The head of the principal arch is filled with a large foliated circle, and those of the sub-arches by smaller quatrefoil circles. The gable of this compartment has a Catherine-wheel or rose window inserted, and is surmounted by a stone cross. The windows of the side compartments are smaller, and of two lights each, with foliated heads, the main arch having a foliated circle. The gables of these divisions have niches with trefoiled heads, and hood mouldings resting on corbel heads, and are also surmounted with crosses. At the north-west angle of the building a lofty square tower of four stories is placed, having its angles flanked by buttresses placed at right angles to each other and to the face of the wall, and surmounted by octagonal turrets, intended to carry crocketed pinnacles, to be added when the spire is finished. A pierced parapet terminates the faces of the tower, through which also, in the west front, is the principal entrance. This consists of a deeply-recessed doorway, divided into two arches by a clustered shaft, having four detached shafts in each of the jambs, from which the walling of the architrave springs. The western elevation is divided into eight bays by four-staged buttresses, which terminate in pedimental heads at the parapet, which is plain. Each of the bays has a window of two lights with foliated heads. In the southernmost bay of this side is a stone porch, which communicates also with the priests' house by means of a short cloister, having narrow lancet windows filled with stained glass. The eastern elevation is similar in style to the western, except that it has a low offset running along its entire length, which is occupied by a series of seven apartments for the priests and confessionals, communicating with the interior by means of double-arched apertures. A porch, similar to the south-western, is also placed at the north-east angle of the structure. Internally it is divided into a nave of 30 feet wide, and two side aisles of 14 feet each. The latter are separated from the nave by eight pillars, having cylindrical shafts, 1 foot in diameter, of polished Drogheda marble, with high cylindrical bases and bell-shaped capitals, covered with foliage placed vertically, with the stems rising from the oak mouldings, and sculptured in the bold manner characteristic of this style of architecture. From these spring equilateral arches, with bold, well-cut architrave mouldings. The apses for the high altar is of hexagonal shape, and lighted by three double-light windows, with richly-sculptured mullions, and foliated tracery in the heads. The doorways communicating with the confessionals before mentioned, have elegant shafts in the jambs, and foliated arches, with elaborately-cut mouldings in the archivolts. The ceiling of the nave is semi-hexagonal, and divided into square compartments by strong frame-work, which is moulded and otherwise enriched, and the whole is coloured to resemble dark oak. It is purposed, hereafter, to paint and embellish this with stars, and various religious devices. In the aisles the timbers of the roof are visible, and stained oak colour. Over the principal entrance in the tower is the organ-loft, and a slightly projecting gallery adjoining in the aisle is appropriated to the choir.

\* See p. 431, ante.